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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DISPATCHING AN AIRBORNE DRONE TO CARRY AN ITEM TO A CUSTOMER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A control circuit dispatches towards a delivery zone a terrestrial vehicle that carries at least one airborne drone and at least one item to be delivered to a customer. When the terrestrial vehicle is in the delivery zone, the drone is dispatched to carry the item to the customer. By one approach the drone exits the terrestrial vehicle without bearing the item. The item can be automatically moved from within the terrestrial vehicle to a position such that the item is at least partially exposed external to the terrestrial vehicle. The airborne drone, subsequent to exiting the terrestrial vehicle, can engage the item in order to then deliver that item to the customer. By one approach the terrestrial vehicle includes one or more platforms that support one or more airborne drones and that can be moved from within the terrestrial vehicle to a deployed position external to the terrestrial vehicle.

10 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets